

COVID-19 is a reportable disease that requires case management and contact tracing. Contact tracing is a key component of the public health management of reportable diseases and is an important tool that can help stop the spread of COVID-19 in a community. Contact tracing involves identifying people who were exposed to COVID-19, informing those people of their exposure and providing them with education and advice on how to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.

The COVID-19 Contact Tracing Support Tool was developed for Community Health Nurses (CHNs) to identify individuals in the community that can assist with contact tracing in the event that additional supports are needed. Identifying individuals from community programs or partnerships with a background in health who would be able to assist with contact tracing can help the community better respond to COVID-19 cases. Such individuals or resources may include, but not be limited to:

- Community Health Representative
- Home & Community Care Program
- Local health authorities
- Local Public Health Unit (based on relationship and availability)
- Communicable Disease Team
- Environmental Public Health Officers  
(in consultation with EPHO Manager or CD Team)

When identifying supporting individuals for contact tracing it is important to ensure:

- Individuals have health care, or public health, experience and knowledge
- Individuals, and their managers, are aware and agreeable to completing contact tracing as required
- Individuals listed within the COVID-19 Contact Tracing Support Tool are aware of:
  - The purpose and means of contact tracing
  - The appropriate public health forms to complete, and where to submit upon completion (including having access to the forms)
  - The importance of maintaining privacy and confidentiality with information obtained
  - Who to contact when questions arise
- A lead person is identified to ensure individuals who are helping with contact tracing are trained and supported
- A lead person is identified to ensure individuals who are helping with contact tracing are offered, or referred to, assistance for emotional wellbeing and debriefing as needed
- A plan is developed, and communicated with identified individuals, as to when additional help is required and the process of notification is in place

This COVID-19 Contact Tracing Support tool is not mandatory for communities to implement but rather supports a community based response to COVID-19. The CD Team, along with additional local resources (i.e. the local public health unit, local health authority, or Nurse Managers/Nurse Practice Consultants) can provide support and guidance to communities with contact tracing, while helping answer questions surrounding contact tracing. It is recognized that some health facilities may not need to generate a list of supports for contact tracing as sufficient staffing is in place, or there may already be an established relationship with allied partners who can assist with contact tracing when (ie Public Health Units or local health authorities).

For additional questions surrounding the tool, or contact tracing, please reach out to the CD team for support.